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Zibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways



Historic Preservation in Michigan

2016 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation

The Saginaw-Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan; Central Michigan University Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work; and the City of Mount Pleasant

The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Archaeological Investigation

In 2011, the State of Michigan conveyed separate portions of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School property to the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan and the City of Mount Pleasant. The school had been part of a system of boarding schools established by the federal government after the Civil War in an effort to extinguish Native American language and culture.

The tribe partnered with Central Michigan University to conduct archaeological field schools at the site. The research identified previously unknown archaeological sites, provided additional documentation for known sites, including the foundations of eight campus buildings, and produced revised boundaries for the Mission Creek Cemetery.

The investigations at the boarding school will likely continue for years to come. The collaboration between the tribe, CMU archaeologists and the city is a model for such projects. Through research and outreach activities they are bringing new life to a blighted property with a troubled past and promoting healing and understanding about the lives of the students who once lived there.

